

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Minutes of April 9, 2019**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Lynn Doney, Julie H. Goodrich, Kenneth W. Goslant, and Nathaniel Miller. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Lydia Petty, Raymond Pelletier, Bruce Wright, and Elroy Hill.

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Board members and the public were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** There were no changes to the posted agenda.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED)

- a. Lydia Petty: AARP Vermont Placemaking Grant Application.** Ms. Petty said she recently attended an AARP Vermont seminar regarding grant opportunities with Bonnie Donahue and Andrea Melville. All those who attended are eligible to apply for an AARP Vermont mini-grant on behalf of their communities. After some discussion, the decision was made to apply for funds to install signage that would create a temporary pedestrian route linking the Common and the Water Street Park. This would be highlighted by a non-motorized parade along the route at a date to be determined. Ms. Petty said the parade probably would be held in July or August but they are looking for a date that will not conflict with other scheduled events. The application will require a letter of support from the Select Board and she added the grant requires no local match amount. The Select Board members expressed their support for the grant application and thanked Ms. Petty, Ms. Donahue, and Ms. Melville for their efforts. Manager Schulz will provide the formal letter of support to be included with the application form.
- b. Sally Davidson: Recreation Committee update.** Ms. Davidson was unable to attend tonight but she did email Board member Doney with the information she wanted to present. The recent chicken barbeque fundraiser was a big success and provided \$1,416.99 that will go towards the rehabilitation of the Memorial Park basketball courts. The next Spring Cleanup Day will be held on Saturday, April 27, 2019. Volunteers will meet first at Memorial Park at 9:00 a.m. in order to be given their tasks there or at Northfield Falls Park. Lunch will be provided at 1:00 p.m. and the day's work should be completed by 3:00 p.m. The volunteers are encouraged to bring their own tools but are asked to label them properly so there is no confusion regarding ownership at the end of the day. In addition, the Recreation Committee will be working again with the Northfield Farmers Market to install a Maypole on the Common for a May Day Dance at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 1, 2019. Last year's inaugural event went very well so the Select Board is being asked permission to hold another one. There was no objection.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. March 26, 2019 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VI. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- a. Warrant #19-19.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve Warrant #19-19 in the amount of \$570,996.70. Board member Goslant noted payments to Lyndon Rescue for ambulance billing services. He had understood the municipality was looking to find another vendor for these services. Manager Schulz said most of the problems that caused this consideration had been resolved so there are no current plans to change. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- b. **Approval of Biweekly Payroll through March 24, 2019.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve the biweekly payroll in the amount of \$81,191.76. Board member Doney noted the Northfield Police Department (NPD) had \$2,064 in overtime costs and \$1,193 in part-time employee expenses for this pay period. He asked why these amounts were so high. Manager Schulz said a number of full-time officers had taken vacation time and there also had been a prolonged investigation that required overtime. He noted the municipality did save some money by making use of part-time officers to fill shift shortfalls. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VII. LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

a. Outside Consumption Permit

- 1. **Good Measure Brewing Company.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the Outside Consumption Permit. Manager Schulz noted the permit period requested is year-round but he felt the local climate would result in outside seating ending by November. Board member Doney asked if the seating was just on the sidewalk with no plans to use any parking spaces. Manager Schulz confirmed that was the case. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VIII. SELECT BOARD

- a. **Engineering Services Agreement: South Main Street Stormwater/CSO Project.** Manager Schulz said the engineer for this project, as well as representatives from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), had attended recent Select Board meetings in order to provide information on the scope of this project and the likelihood of state funding. He noted the State of Vermont is really pushing for this project to be completed sooner rather than later with the main objective of eliminating the Combined Sewer Outlet (CSO) on East Street. Despite long discussion and some consideration of the possibility, the Select Board members ultimately decided the July 1, 2019 deadline to start the project in order to secure previously allocated state funding was not feasible due to many unresolved questions that might undermine the ability to achieve a successful bond vote. However, Manager Schulz felt it might be worthwhile to approve the agreement with the project engineer to finalize the project plans. This would provide hard figures for various phases of the project and might hasten the process for applying for outside funding. The percentage of total project costs the State might be willing to cover has fluctuated but the thirty-four percent (34%) figure now seems more likely. The engineering services will cost \$70,000 and ANR will pay for half the cost. In addition, ANR already has approved the proposed engineering services agreement.

Chair Maxwell asked if the agreement would provide complete plans for the full scope of the project under consideration and thereby include South Main Street, the East Street CSO, Slate Avenue, and other side streets. Manager Schulz confirmed it would even though the current strategy seems to be to reduce the project scope to address only South Main Street and the CSO in the initial construction phase. Chair Maxwell noted the engineering would provide a road map for later phases of the project.

Chair Maxwell asked where the local share (\$35,000) for the engineering study will come from. Manager Schulz said he has suggested splitting the amount evenly between the Highway Department and Sewer Department. Chair Maxwell noted there was recent precedent for this as Central Street Water Project expenditures were split between the Highway Department and the Water Department. Board member Miller attended a recent Utility Commissions meeting and said there was some resistance expressed to having the Sewer Department pay more than half of the local expenditures.

Chair Maxwell also has concerns that even though the State of Vermont might pledge to fund a set percentage of the total project costs, Northfield might not obtain the actual funds for several years. Manager Schulz confirmed the State has committed to major projects in Burlington and Rutland in the short term. Board member Goslant would like a firmer commitment from ANR regarding state funding since they are the ones pushing to have this project completed as soon as possible.

Chair Maxwell believes having the engineering plan in hand would be a good first step but has concerns about its shelf life should some portions of the project be delayed for several years. He doesn't want to pay additional funds to have the study updated by another engineer to reflect higher construction costs, new technology, etc. He doesn't see any reason to rush approval of the engineering services agreement especially when the level of the State's financial commitment to this project remains uncertain.

Board member Miller asked if the cost of the engineering study could be reduced if its scope is reduced to reflect the current thinking on the project's timeline. Manager Schulz brought up this possibility with the engineer and it was suggested it might reduce the cost by \$20,000. Chair Maxwell noted the full project would have to be completed at some time but reducing the study's scope might be a good option for now. He asked Manager Schulz to get a firmer commitment on this from the engineer. There was no objection to tabling consideration of the engineering services agreement until more information has been received.

- b. Northfield Fire Station Roof Replacement Project.** Chair Maxwell noted the replacement of this roof had been a recommendation of the Town Buildings & Energy Subcommittee. In addition, at the March 2018 Town Meeting Northfield voters did authorize funds up to \$60,000 for this project. Manager Schulz said bids were solicited for this project with an April 8, 2019 deadline. The RFP was advertised in the *Times Argus* and bid forms were sent to about twenty (20) roofing contractors in the Central Vermont area. Two bids were received by the deadline from Burrell Roofing Company (Williamstown, VT) and Iron Horse Standing Seam Roofing Company (Tunbridge, VT). Burrell's Roofing's bid price is \$65,000 and includes installing a 24 gauge prefinished double-locked standing seam metal roof. If any deteriorated wood is found during installation, there would be an additional charge of \$70 per hour per laborer. Iron Horse Roofing provided separate bid amounts for 26 gauge and 24 gauge metal roofs (\$19,975 and \$25,775 respectively) as well as additional charges for double locking the roof seams (\$3,575) and disposal of old asphalt shingles (\$12,225). A rough match with Burrell's bid specs would be about \$42,000. Board member Goslant noted Burrell's submission seems to include much more detail on the scope of work, i.e. the installation of ice and water shielding, etc. Chair Maxwell agreed Iron Horse appears to have submitted a lower bid amount but their submission is less specific on what is included for the price. He would like Manager Schulz to contact both bidders for more information so that the Select Board members would be able to compare apples to apples (not to oranges) when awarding the project. He added there are funds in the building's CIP account should total project costs exceed the voter-approved \$60,000 amount.
- c. Union Street/Water Street Stormwater Project.** Manager Schulz said bids for this project originally were due today but the deadline was extended to Wednesday, April 17, 2019 when the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC), which is overseeing this project for the municipality, provided potential bidders with an addendum to the bid specs last week. Since CVRPC is the lead agency for this project, it will make the decision on whom to award this project. There will be some input into the decision from Manager Schulz and Utility Superintendent Patrick DeMasi. Manager Schulz said the extended bid deadline should not significantly delay the construction phase of this project, which is expected to begin before the end of May 2019.
- d. Town Highway Annual Financial Plan.** Manager Schulz said the State of Vermont requires each municipality to approve an annual financial plan for local road maintenance each spring. The plan includes the amount to be raised through local taxation, Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) funds, prior year surplus, etc. In the next fiscal year, in Northfield that amount will be \$1,481,660. Expenditures for this amount will be split between Winter Maintenance (\$509,940), Non-Winter Maintenance (\$524,360), and Major Construction Projects (\$447,360). Each municipality must show it will be spending more than \$300 per mile of local road and Northfield will far exceed this amount. Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve and sign the Town Highway Annual Financial Plan. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- e. **CVFiber Representative Appointment.** Manager Schulz said CVFiber (formerly Central Vermont Internet) is working to provide high speed internet access to underserved areas of Central Vermont. They have asked each member community to appoint a representative (and alternate) to attend their meetings and provide input on how best to achieve this. John Quinn III served as Northfield's CVFiber representative this past year but due to other obligations cannot continue (even though he is willing to serve as alternate representative). Raymond Pelletier has submitted a letter of interest to serve as the next CVFiber Representative for Northfield. He said he has been teaching law and political courses at Norwich University (NU) for the past five years and was contacted by NU Professor and CVFiber Chair Jeremy Hansen to take Mr. Quinn's place. Mr. Pelletier said he has a professional background in internet technology and is willing to provide the time needed for CVFiber meetings, subcommittee work, etc. He also has experience in project financing management. Chair Maxwell hopes Mr. Pelletier will provide Manager Schulz with periodic updates on CVFiber matters and perhaps address the Select Board should there be any major developments in the next twelve months. Mr. Pelletier said CVFiber appears to be focused on financial matters at the moment and he doesn't anticipate any internet infrastructure installations until at least 2023. Board member Goslant believes providing high-speed internet access to all Central Vermont residents is an admirable goal but is unsure how this can be achieved at a reasonable cost. He is glad Mr. Pelletier is willing to provide his expertise to work this out. Motion by Board member Miller, seconded by Board member Doney, to appoint Raymond Pelletier as Northfield's Representative to CVFiber. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- f. **Board of Listers Appointment.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to appoint Susan Popowski to the vacant position on the Board of Listers. Board member Goslant noted Ms. Popowski has past Lister experience and it is good she has come forward to serve again. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

IX. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS

- a. **Local Roads Update.** Board member Goslant asked how our roads have been performing during this Mud Season. Manager Schulz said they are holding up relatively well based on his conversations with Highway Foreman Trent Tucker along with a backroads tour. There have been several concerns expressed about the condition of Union Brook Road and Cox Brook Road. Manager Schulz noted he has applied for a VTTrans grant to repave Cox Brook Road, which has several significant holes and cracks. He added the new patching material is doing well and has been used on Main Street, Union Street, Water Street, Union Brook Road, etc. It was not used on Cox Brook Road because the holes and cracks there are too large.
- b. **NU Student South Main Street Jaywalking Problem.** Board member Doney still has concerns about NU students crossing the road adjacent to the campus at bad curves where pedestrian visibility is a problem. Chair Maxwell has been contacted by an NU employee who has heard of these concerns and he believes there will be an effort to get students to use nearby crosswalks instead. He believes NU will be pro-active on this matter. Board member Doney would like something done before someone is hit due to early morning darkness, fog, etc. Board member Goslant also believes NU will take this matter seriously.
- c. **Hockman Hill Drainage Issue.** Board member Doney wanted to thank Highway Foreman Tucker and his crew for responding so quickly during a recent storm when it seemed Hockman Hill Road was in danger of washing out. He also wanted to thank Hockman Hill residents Ken Johnson and Albert Poulen for alerting the municipality about the problem so quickly before the situation deteriorated further.
- d. **VTTrans Pedestrian Safety Analysis.** Board member Goodrich noted the study was in the Select Board packets and asked if there would be a discussion of it tonight. Manager Schulz said the study was received late last week while he was on vacation so he hasn't had time to fully review it. This matter will be on the agenda of the next regular meeting (04/23/19) and there will be a full discussion at that time.

- e. **Police Union Contract Negotiations Update.** Chair Maxwell said this negotiation process has been proceeding well and he feels confident an agreement will be wrapped up soon. Manager Schulz noted he and the Labor Agreement & Bargaining Subcommittee members (Chair Maxwell and Board member Goodrich) then can focus on negotiating a new contract for the municipality's other union employees.
- f. **Northfield Recycling Depot & Transfer Station.** Chair Maxwell asked about the status of the facility. Manager Schulz said Eric Davis (All Clean Waste Services) has been operating it since last fall when Earth Waste Systems said it could no longer run it without a subsidy from the municipality. Given the urgency at the time to keep the facility open for the public, it was agreed then that Mr. Davis would run it as a fast track entity on behalf of the municipality (similar to a roadside trash collection business). However, since fast track facilities are limited to a few trash collection vehicles each day, Mr. Davis recently informed Manager Schulz that it would be more economically feasible for him to run it on a more permanent basis. As this requires additional paperwork (including monthly reports to the State), Manager Schulz has been working with Mr. Davis on making sure all the proper documentation is provided for the proper state permit. Board member Goslant feels Mr. Davis has done an outstanding job of operating the facility and is pleased he will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

X. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. **Northfield Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Update.** Manager Schulz said recently there have been strong odors emanating from the WWTF. One reason is melting snow caused a large amount of cold water runoff entering the WWTF, which disrupted the normal chemical treatment process. In addition, a local business switched to cleaning supplies with stronger compounds and this also interfered with the normal process of converting wastewater into effluent. The business was contacted and has agreed to revert back to the old cleaning chemicals. Manager Schulz believes the WWTF odor problem seems to be improving each day.

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED)

- a. **Bruce Wright: Memorial Park Dugout Fence.** Mr. Wright is the new head coach for the Northfield High School Baseball team and he has concerns about the new fencing installed recently near the dugouts at the Frank Pecora Ballfield at Memorial Park. He believes the new fencing is not only unnecessary but also constitutes a safety hazard to both players and coaches. Mr. Wright also feels the fencing restricts movement in and out of the dugout and he wanted to know why it was installed without any prior consultation with those who use the ballfield on a regular basis. Manager Schulz only learned of this issue yesterday afternoon and he reached out to the municipality's liability insurance carrier. He was told insurance adjustors normally encourage such fencing for safety reasons but it is possible it wasn't installed properly. He is willing to inspect the fencing with Mr. Wright and the insurance adjustor present. Manager Schulz would like to get this done this week before the spring baseball season starts in earnest. Mr. Wright was agreeable to this suggestion.

XII. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.

These minutes were approved at the regular Select Board meeting of April 23, 2019.